

**T.F.S.**

**Three, five, and seven**

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By Stan Shapiro MD, Grand Lodge Education Officer G.L. of MN

#212

*“Every right implies a responsibility; every opportunity, an obligation, every possession, a duty”.*

John D. Rockefeller

*“When some men discharge an obligation you can hear the report for miles around”* Mark Twain

Brother Jeffery W. Agan, Templar Lodge LEO and member of the Rochester Lodge #21, sent this informative article to me to be edited for this publication. It has an important message about our commitment to our brothers and God.

### **Oaths and Obligations Are Commitments.**

Are the words in an oath or an obligation we just say or words that we live by. Ask yourself the following questions: Why do you say the pledge of Allegiance? What is the pledge? Repeat it aloud slowly and listen to the words. “I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all”. Are they just words? Do you say them because that is what we do? Did you mean what you said?

What is meaning of the word obligation? Webster’s has the following definition:

Obligation: Any debt, written promise, or duty.

As Masons each of us has taken an obligation more than once. So what did the repeating of this obligation mean to you? Were they words you repeated or were they words that had a purpose and a duty?

The Obligations that we took at each of the degrees that began our journey as Mason’s were placed there because they had meaning and a purpose. The obligations that we took had a debt with them, a duty, and a promise to the members of the craft and God. Does the same weight apply to the obligations as they did the day the craft started, or when the operative

members of the craft took their obligations? Each of us need to look inside of our self and see the reason we said these obligations and at the other oaths or obligations that we have taken. Do you live by the words of the obligation? If not, see if you can live by them. If you cannot then consider the possibility, Masonry is not the place for you.

If we allow members in the craft to just say the obligation to complete the degree, what does the future hold for the craft? Will there be a craft if the brother just says words that have no meaning or duty for him to follow? When you enter the lodge the day you took your first steps in Masonry, what did you do before you took the first degree? Before you were allowed to seek entry, what where ask some questions into the lodge? Each asked on your honor do you .... ; So from the beginning of your journey as a Mason, honor was a key aspect of Masonry.

Brothers, the obligations we take as Masons are not mere words. The words of the obligations have a debt to them, a debt not just to the brothers of the craft but to the deity that each of us invoked during the obligations. So we must look again at the obligation we took and ask if we just did it so we could complete the degree. Did we say it with a true heart and understanding that our Deity accepted the obligation as a debt that each of us has to answer to on that day when we enter into that house not made with hands?

There was a time when a man's word was his bond, that if a man said that he was going to do something then he did it and when there was a sense of honor. A lack of honor among men is one of the reasons for the issues we have in society today.

Without honor there is little chance that a society can continue. If a king or ruler wanted to do away with a group or person they had people present false witness against them. If the society has honor, it makes it harder for the leaders to find people who are willing to lie.

Brothers of the craft owe it to our brothers that have gone before us to honor the craft and to ensure that we only allow brothers into the craft that understand that the obligations are not just parts of the degrees. The words have meaning and a debt that will be paid one day.

It is important that each of us to think before we act and to think when we say the Pledge of Allegiance. Are they just words or do you mean what you are saying? Remember the Pledge is a form of an obligation. Never take an oath or obligation without realizing it is a commitment to our brothers and God and is based on our honor.

**Words to Live By:** *"I believe that a worthwhile life is defined by a kind of spiritual journey and a sense of obligation".* ---Hillary Rodham Clinton

**If you have any comments, suggestions, or questions, please send them to**

[shapiro.stanley@gmail.com](mailto:shapiro.stanley@gmail.com) <<mailto:shapiro.stanley@gmail.com>>

The Education Videos by our education committee can be viewed at:

<http://www.youtube.com/glmned>

The latest Masonic Monday Question, and some of the past questions, can be viewed at

[www.Lodgebuilder.org](http://www.Lodgebuilder.org) and at [www.mn-masons.org](http://www.mn-masons.org)